**PRESS RELEASE**

Rising electricity price drives demand for higher-efficiency motors

**22 February 2022:** With electricity prices increasing rapidly, the justification for adopting more efficient motors is that much greater. To achieve this improved efficiency, such motors are designed to run cooler, which prolongs the insulation lifespan for added reliability. Although most First World and many local end users specify higher-efficiency motors, the South African market still largely opts for cheaper IE1 motors, which are cheaper to buy but more expensive to run.

“The bulk of South African low-voltage (LV) motor purchases are driven by price,” notes [Bearings International (BI)](http://www.bearings.co.za) Business Unit Leader: Motors and Drives **Stephen Bekker**. On average, the initial capital outlay constitutes less than 5% of the cost of a motor over its lifespan. A small percentage is maintenance, while most of the running cost is the electricity consumption. The payback is generally under two years, with the average motor lifespan of ten to 15 years or more translating into an eightfold saving on the initial capital outlay.

Leading supplier BI is an ABB Channel Partner for low-voltage LV motors. “ABB is regarded as one of the largest motor manufacturers in the world, if not the largest. It is a premium product known worldwide for its reliability and design,” highlights Bekker. BI provides comprehensive support for ABB LV motors from sales to stock, technical support, application support and spares.

BI stocks the ABB IE1 and IE3 motor ranges, with IE4 and IE5 motors available ex-factory. The complete offering ranges from 0.55 kW to 355 kW and higher if requested. However, BI concentrates on the 15 kW to 250 kW four-pole motor range, believed to make up 75% of total IE3 motor sales.

“We have found that ABB motors are installed in many countries across Africa, so our aim is to make the LV units more accessible in terms of end-user sales. We are seeing more of a demand in South Africa from an OEM and project specification perspective,” adds Bekker.

Locally, mining has always proven a lucrative sector for BI. With high commodity prices and projects coming back online after delays due to Covid-19, this industry is a key focus for BI going forward. Other growth sectors include sugar, pulp and paper, food and beverage, and water and wastewater.

“ABB’s extensive range allows us to offer high-quality solutions to all industries,” stresses Bekker. BI has grown the Motors & Drives team from two resources to a team of five with a sixth position still open. The Team includes a Product Development Leader, two Business Development Leaders and an electric motor technical expert. “Our plan is to train up technical support within BI, as well offer customer training,” he concludes.

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**Notes to the Editor**  
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**About BI**  
BI is a member of the Hudaco Group. BI is a leading distributor of bearings and power transmission products in Southern Africa. With its customer-focused approach, BI is committed to delivering value to all its stakeholders, while offering quality solutions that make a real difference to optimising plant availability and turnaround time. With over 60 years in the bearings and power transmission industry, BI puts its experience to good use by going great lengths to ensure their product range and services meet the changing needs of clients, industry, and business. Backed by an elite technical team, BI covers the full spectrum of customer requirements, and can ensure immediate availability of products through a nationwide network of branches.

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